

THE

SPIRITUAL TIMES

A WEEKLY ORGAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF SPIRITUAL AND
PROGRESSIVE TOPICS,

A REGISTER OF PASSING SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA, AND A MISCELLANY
OF SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

Spiritualism unfolds to our internal senses substantial realities; it presents us not only with the semblances, but with the positive evidences of eternal existence, causing us to feel that the passing shadows we speak of belong not to the Spiritual, but to the Material world. It is easy to imagine that we are dealing with the absolute and enduring, because we associate our thoughts with the external and apparently lasting, but, on reflection, we discover that the only absolute and enduring facts are beyond the tomb.

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"The life that now is shapes the life that is to be."
"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

The Spiritual Times.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1864.

IDENTITY OF SPIRITS.

We approach this subject with considerable caution, knowing the intricate difficulties which attend it. Most Spiritualists will confess that very many of the manifestations which take place at séances come not burdened with satisfactory proofs of identity. And this is not to be wondered at. How often do we find ourselves the victims of mistaken identity in our intercourse with mankind? Cases are on record where individuals have suffered losses, imprisonment, and even death, because they happened to be like the real offenders. If, therefore, mistakes of identity are made in our intercourse with spirits in the flesh, how much more likely is it that similar mistakes should be made with spirits out of the flesh. We cannot be too careful in accepting spirit communications, because deceiving spirits find over credulous people easy prey. Whilst, however, we watch and wait for proofs of identity with the strictest caution, let us beware of falling into the error of asserting, that because there are deceiving spirits, who cheat us as to identity, there are no truthful spirits and trustworthy cases of identity. The experiences of Spiritualists are various, yet most of them have evidences clear to themselves, which would not probably be clear to others, of the identity of spirits with whom they or their friends have held converse. It is, of course, seeing the difficulty of getting at absolute proof, easy enough to beg the question, or put it out of consideration. But such a course will not answer it. We need, therefore, to well weigh evidences and collect facts, in order that we may fairly judge this case of identity. To those who will not accept the testimony they have at hand, we ask what evidence will satisfy them. Are they content to abide by the common and legitimate modes of obtaining proofs of ordinary life transactions? if so, let them apply a similar process to spirit-identity. Men are apt to be suspicious of their fellow men, even when there is little to lead to suspicion. This results from a false state of society, and, in spite of all good christian teachings, it has become a habit of the general

mind to be suspicious. There is, doubtless, a necessity for men to guard themselves against being duped, since the very life of commerce in, alas! too many instances, breeds dishonesty, masked in deceit. But the danger of this is that the habit of suspecting grows so strong that no new facts can be investigated without conviction is retarded from the effect of suspicion. Whilst, therefore, it is obviously necessary that we strictly examine before we receive any evidences, be they of a material or spiritual character, it is likewise as obviously necessary to guard ourselves against the supreme rule of suspicion, that we may not lose the truth, either from over-credulousness, or unyielding incredulity. A temperate exercise of all our faculties is, doubtless, requisite to bring us into harmony with true life. If the logical faculties have overwhelming predominance, the aspirational or emotional faculties cannot have proper play, and *vice versa*. Spiritualism comes to us not to disqualify reason, but to sanctify and exercise feeling. Hence people find they are often satisfied of certain truths, not from any direct result of logic, but of impression. They feel convictions which they fail to shape into words, but from which they have no possible escape, because doubt is quelled by the force of irresistible internal evidences. How impossible is it for persons so influenced to explain, after the manner of Euclid, cause and effect? Remaining true to their own internal life, they become anomalies to the physical philosopher; yet all the figures of science worked out of the brains of all the Euclids and Cockers in the universe could never persuade them to mistrust their own internal experiences. The attempt to reason people into conviction that certain alleged phenomena are proved in the internal life of others is a task not easy of accomplishment. Those who are the mediums of such phenomena must, to a great extent, be content to confine their experiences to themselves. What the world outside wants are unmistakeable proofs of identity. To discover such proofs we need much perseverance and care. In order to give testimony in favour of the question of identity, we will briefly state a few facts which, within the past six months, have come very prominently under our own immediate notice, which, to our thinking, appear to weigh on the side of identity most thoroughly. At a séance with Mr. Cooper and his daughter, (who was very rapidly developed as a writing medium, producing fac-similes of her spirit mother's chirography, also fac-similes of the autographs of others in the spirit world, whose hand-writing she had never seen, which, to our mind, is one of the strongest proofs of spirit-identity; she was made to write a peculiar word, which none of us could



decipher. Several times the same word, with similar characters to the first, was formed. At last, the idea came to Mr Cooper that the word might signify a pet name which his wife used to call him when she was on the earth. Eager intimations were given by the spirit that he was right. We examined the word written several times over, and had no difficulty in tracing the "pet name" through them all. Mr Cooper said he had not thought of the name for years, and he was quite satisfied his children never heard it, either from his wife's lips or his own. It is, of course, easy to invent theories, and, setting the plain testimony on one side, rush from fact to fancy; but we prefer the simple, direct course of reasoning which carries us to the hypothesis of identity.

The next case we offer wears some very peculiar features. Miss C—C— was on a visit to Mrs Powell. She had never before experienced in herself conscious mediumistic power. We were engaged writing. The young lady was at needle-work. Of a sudden, her hand was violently shaken, and she betrayed fear. Do what she would, she could not control her own hand. The power that possessed her *would* shake her hand. In order to quell, if possible, the nervous effect produced in her by this unexpected phenomenon, we placed a pencil in her hand. Immediately her hand wrote with lightning rapidity, "Go to Mary Cooper." "What for?" she wrote. "I have something to say to you." "What is it? and who are you?" The name of a person whom she had known years before, to her surprise, was written. There was an effort on the part of Miss C—C— to release herself from the influence of the spirit; but it was useless. We persuaded her, with difficulty, to master all fears, and wait further evidences. She took the pencil again, and was made rapidly to write, "Go to Pembroke Villa." "What for?" To my sister; she is ill," was the answer to her enquiry. "I shall do no such thing; your sister and I have not been friends for years. Besides, only her parents live at Pembroke Villa. Your sister is many miles away in the country." The answer came assuring her that the lady in question was at Pembroke Villa, and that she must go to her. Miss C—C— left Eastbourne for London that evening, having answered many of our queries, which gave us the idea that she was not thinking either of the communicating spirit or her sister when she was so mysteriously operated upon, and that she certainly would not trouble herself to go where the spirit had desired. On entering Mr Cooper's house after Miss C—C— had departed, we were much surprised to learn that Miss Cooper was engaged about the same time as Miss C—C— had been, and she had been made to write, "Go to Miss C—C—." Coupling this with the item about Miss C—C— writing, "Go to Mary Cooper," we obtain tolerably clear evidence of intelligence. But to proceed; a few weeks ago we saw Miss C—C—, and heard from her lips a statement which gave us the impression that she would, if she would submit to be developed, make a very excellent medium. She said she found her mind so repeatedly impressed, in spite of her determination not to submit to the spirit's behest to go to Pembroke Villa, that, at last, she determined to make enquiries in the neighbourhood, and then, to her astonishment, she ascertained that the spirit's sister was at Pembroke Villa, ill in bed.*

In this case the facts warrant the conclusion that the communicating agent was identically the spirit sister of the sick lady at Pembroke Villa. If, then, we lacked evidences of spirit life very near to us, we now have them curiously manifesting themselves through the organism of Mrs Powell, who, during the past six months, has been developing. She sometimes is made to perform certain acts which give presumptive proof to others of spirit identity. She rarely speaks or writes; but yet, by dumb processes, she is the medium of bringing conviction to others "that the dead live." At the house of Mr G. E. Harris, Mrs Powell was entranced, and after an affecting scene, in which her face was illumined with an expression belonging not to her normal condition, but which gave the mind a solemn sense of holy sweetness, she placed her head on Mrs Harris's breast, looked up into her eyes, uttered feebly, "mum, mum, mum," and then, with an intense child-like helplessness, appeared to "pass away." This, of course, had very little meaning for us. But Mrs Harris saw in it all a meaning which brought grievous tears to her eyes. She afterwards told us that the whole scene was a perfect reproduction of

the manner, utterances, expression, and death of her little girl Eva, who had lately died. We cannot help thinking that this case was about as perfect a case of identity, apart from witnessing the objective appearance of the child, the mother could possibly obtain. Again, we took tea with a lady and gentleman near London, well-known Spiritualists. Mrs Powell was entranced. She was made to sit down and move her arms about like a person in the act of rowing a boat. Presently, she was thrown on to the floor, and she appeared to be buffeting imaginary waves, and seemed to undergo the process of drowning. This, to us, was valueless as proof of anything further than spirit-possession until we heard the lady and gentleman express their satisfaction that the spirit was their son, who had been drowned while rowing a boat. We knew nothing of the fact that our host and hostess had lost a son by drowning. Therefore there was no preconceived workings of the mind on our part to account for the medium's personation. The theory that Mrs Powell was in a clairvoyant state, and subjected to the thoughts of one or more of the company, is without the slightest reasonable support; because in her entranced condition she retains her consciousness. She sees all around her as in her normal state, and hears all that is said to her, but she has not always the power to speak from her own volition. We give one other illustration of Mrs Powell's mediumship being exercised in proof of identity. She was sitting alone with Miss S—, a lady with whom she was staying on a visit. They had both of them repeatedly seen visions in a crystal. On the evening in question, Miss S— saw distinctly, in the crystal, the well-known face of a female friend who had been in the spirit life some two years. She appeared to her quite unlooked for. Miss S—, very much surprised, yet somewhat doubting, said "If you are really Mrs B—, please do something through Mrs Powell which I shall recognise you by." A few minutes elapsed, when Mrs Powell's hands were suddenly lifted towards her mouth, and she appeared to be playing a flageolet or whistle. Instantly, Miss S— recognised the act as a prototype of one that passed when the spirit was in the body on an occasion when they were together in a pleasure boat. After a little while, the medium stopped the movements of the mouth and fingers, and exclaimed, "Then you do recognise me!" and commenced a little pleasurable process of magnetic percussion upon the shoulders of Miss S—. Here in this case Miss S— perceives objectively the features and form of one who had passed away from earth, and does not remember having her in her thoughts even. To make assurance doubly sure, she asks the spirit to give her further satisfaction by causing another medium to perform some little act (not in the mind of Miss S— at the time). It is done. Miss S— then remembers a certain scene in a boat where, in a mirthful mood, Mrs B— (the spirit) took from her pocket a whistle, and commenced playing upon it.

Such are a few out of several cases which have come near to us, in which we see clear and direct proofs of identity. We may be authoritatively asked to demonstrate any one of these facts. That, we cannot do, any more than we can demonstrate the existence of Alexander, or the myriads of marvellous facts attested by history. We do with spirit identity as we do with every-day concerns—look for the marks which are the credentials of their value. We have chosen to confine our illustrations to the circle of our own experiences, and, where we dare, have given names because the subject is one important in all its phases, and we feel it necessary to place the facts we know, without reserve, before the public. We should like to find more interest bestowed in this question of identity, and shall very gladly publish reliable accounts of personal experiences.

The spiritual fabric is not built up of mere visionary stones. The evidences which establish identity in numerous cases are as logically clear as any problem in mathematics; but they may seem to vanish at the touch of test when it is applied by those who are ignorant and prejudiced. If a man start out to prove the truth a lie, he may do it to the satisfaction of himself and some few of his fellow creatures, but he reckons without his host, and leaves behind him a long account unsettled. For physical tests employ physical apparatus—for spiritual tests employ spiritual conditions. If faith evolve an atmosphere favourable to spirit impression or spirit communication in any way, it is useless to use doubt alone as the test instrument. People who seek not to find will almost certainly *not* find, and almost as certainly denounce those who seek and find. It is in this way the world manages to cling to its ancient pedigree of prejudices, and grows almost stone blind to spiritual life.

* The sick person and Miss C—C— not being friends there was evidently the desire on the part of the communicating intelligence to bring about a mutual reconciliation. Since then the medium was frequently told by the spirits that the sick lady would die on a certain day. She died within forty-eight hours of the prophecy.

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STRANGE OCCURRENCES AT NEWRY IN IRELAND.

Frances and Elizabeth Dixon are two sisters (one about forty, the other thirty years of age) who have lived together in a little house of their own, ever since their mother died, and have always maintained a fair character, both for Honesty and Piety. Seven weeks before Easter, 1779, they began to be disturbed in various ways; and the disturbances have continued day and night, to the present time, June, 17, 1785. One time a little dog appeared, running to and fro in the house. At another time a little old man's head appeared. Their own dog was often extremely frightened, and leaped as high as the table. After being thus tormented four weeks, he lay down, swelled exceedingly, and died.

2. Their cat appeared to be equally frightened; often cried and struggled violently with some invisible agent, by whom she was thrown many times on Fanny Dixon's arms, or in her face, which she scratched terribly.

3. Many stones were thrown at them continually: one of which struck Fanny on the side of her head; almost took away her senses and made a wound which was not easily healed.

4. Many times their yarn was cut, and also their clothes. Frequently their wheels were broken to pieces, and parts of them taken away, so that they could not go on with their work: in which likewise they were continually interrupted, by the throwing of everything about the house day and night. And so much fire was thrown about, they were in constant fear of having the house set on fire. Yea, one day, when there was no fire near her, Fanny's apron was set on fire, as she had it on; and a great part of it consumed, before she could get it off. Frequently an invisible hand took hold of her clothes all round, and pulled and held her down.

5. Every day they heard the sound as of persons walking to and fro in the house. Likewise an unaccountable breathing, puffing and snorting close to their faces. Often they heard the mewing as of many cats at the door; and many times the sound of pistols going off just by them, five or six at a time.

6. Almost every night they heard as it were the loud ticking of a watch close to their ears, which continued without any intermission till the morning, so that they could get no rest. At the same time little creeping things, like clocks seemed to be running over them, both upon and under the bed-clothes. And these often nipped them, so as to make them very sore. Almost every night, things as large as lap-dogs seemed to leap down upon them from the tester of the bed. By these exercises they have not only lost their strength and health, being pale and thin as skeletons, but are likewise reduced to great want; being incapable of earning their living. Yet no murmuring word falls from their mouths. They still say, Let the Lord do as seemeth him good.—*The Arminian Magazine*, 1786.

MY RELIGION.

The opinion of the Protestant churches is this: The Bible is a miraculous collection of miraculous books; every word it contains was written by a miraculous inspiration from God, which was so full, complete and infallible, that the authors delivered the truth and nothing but the truth—that the Bible contains no false statements of fact or doctrine, but sets forth all religious and mortal truth which man needs, or which it is possible for him to receive and no particle of error; therefore, the Bible is the only authoritative rule of religious faith and practice. To doubt this is reckoned a dangerous error, if not an unpardonable sin. The Bible is master of the soul, superior to intellect, truer than conscience. It presupposes that each book within the lids of the Bible has an absolute right to be there, and each sentence and word therein is infallibly true.

Now I ask, is the Bible "the inspired Word of God?" On the answer to this the whole argument depends. Let us look into its origin. When was the Bible formed? where? and by whom?

The Council of Nice, which assembled A.D. 325, under the command of the Emperor Constantine, is the pivot upon which all Ecclesiastical History turns. It was at first composed of two thousand and forty-eight bishops, who became so violent and vociferous, that but for the Emperor's presence they would have engaged in battle. Constantine was obliged to expel one thousand seven hundred and thirty, and only three hundred and eighteen of them remained. Before them was produced a vast number of parchments, or pamphlets, comprising most of the religious writings of the day. From them was selected the present Bible, except "The Acts," not then discovered; also, James, Jude, and the "Revelations," which were rejected.

The Book of Tobit is in the apocrypha—that is, the Church may receive or reject as to them seems proper; but Eusebius, who was present, says it was rejected by three votes; consequently it lacked but three votes of being the inspired Word of God!

But the decision of the Council did not settle the matter; for Dr Lardner acknowledges that so late as A.D. 506 the Canon of the New Testament had not been settled, but Christian people were at liberty to judge for themselves concerning the genuineness of writings proposed to them as Apostolic, and to determine according

to the evidence. Thus it continued until the Council of Toledo, A.D. 633, when the whole subject came up again for consideration. By them the rejected books were received and added to the Canon. Also, "The Acts," found A.D. 408, and thus was the Bible formed.

Now why were not those one thousand seven hundred and thirty discarded bishops as well qualified to decide which books were the "Word of God," as those who remained? It was no infallible judge who made the selection but the corrupt and licentious Constantine.

Thus it appears that what is and what is not "the Word of God," has been decided for us by three hundred and eighteen exasperated bishops, whose decision was afterwards revised and amended by another set of bishops, and given to us as an infallible rule of faith and practice.—*From the Banner of Light*.

(To be continued.)

COMPARISON OF MODERN WITH ANCIENT MIRACLES.

THE simplest form of spirit manifestations known to us are the table movements. Spirits make those movements by magnetism, in the presence of certain persons who are adapted for that kind of mediumship. When spiritual science becomes better understood, this form is little attended to, but yields to higher phases of spiritual phenomena, when the so-called miracles of bygone ages are repeated, and verified beyond the power of contradiction. I don't know anything that is wanting to give force to the modern miracles, that is claimed for the ancient ones. But I do know much evidence for the verity and certainty of what now occurs through hosts of mediums, which it would be difficult to say in favour of what occurred so long ago. I know writers are not accustomed to chronicle the accounts of modern manifestations in the language of the seventeenth century; or they might write a hundred large bibles, all done into chapter and verse, that would, one and all, look not a whit less sacred than the old church book. They would all be full of strange accounts, about healing the sick by laying on of hands; about people being raised from the dead; speaking in unknown tongues; turning water into wine; improvising poetry and prose, excelling in many instances the best normal writings. Such a multitude of authentic documents exist, that I wonder the world does not take the hint and turn them into old English, for the benefit of those who do not understand sacred things in modern English. I don't see that the bible societies should object to this, because they could have them stereotyped and sold cheap, the same as they do with the old book. It would be hailed by the world as one of the greatest movements of the age, if they did so; and their sincerity would become a fact unquestionable. We think the Japanese, and the people of China, would read the modern bibles sooner than the old one, just to see what western civilization had done for us; for there is no doubt they would rather imitate us than the Jews who lived thousands of years ago, when they know we are so much further advanced in all the sciences.

Some of the miracles of the bible have not been repeated, we know, and we are rather glad they have not, as that of throwing great stones down from heaven to destroy the enemies of Israel, by the Lord. We have had stone throwing, but, generally speaking, it has been without danger to life; and the authors of such deeds have usually been considered low spirits. We have just had enough of that kind of spirit larking to shew that spirits can do now such things as were attributed to the Lords and Gods of the ancients, both Jewish and Pagan. It is the same with the fire that used to come down from heaven; strange fire from the Lord, scorching and destroying many. Some mediums have had similar manifestations, but never for the purpose of destruction; modern manifestations having a more beneficent tendency, like those of Jesus Christ. Peter's mediumship caused the death of two individuals, for an apparently slight offence; and Paul took away the eyesight from a man who opposed his teaching. But no modern medium, that I know of, has ever executed any act of vengeance, although they have exhibited every form of power of a benevolent tendency, and furnished a catalogue of signs and wonders such as the world never had before.

There are many wonders done now which we don't read of in the bible at all, and the spirits exhibit such a degree of improvement in others, that one cannot but observe the progress. Snow, rain, and hail have been made to fall thickly in a closed room, where also loud peals of thunder, and the lightning's flash amazed the parties present. All this was done by a spirit that did not command a sacrifice to be offered, or claim the worship of a God. Such a miracle found in the bible would be enough with some to establish the authenticity of the Jewish religion, and claim the homage of men for ever. Direct spirit writing has been greatly improved in our time, and the modern mediums are not requested to believe the authors of it to be God, with a great many aliases. Handwritings on walls have been numerous in this day; but the spirits usually take paper, like common mortals, on which they write or draw most sensibly and exquisitely.

We have levitation exemplified in drawing-rooms, and practically carried out in country places and towns, in a way that has out-Philiped Philip. But it was not the third person that did it, for it seems always to have been a second person, viz., a spirit. Visions are now so common that I will not mention them, only to say he is a poor clairvoyant who has not seen as many as the whole bible contains, with an appendix.

We don't have the word of the Lord coming to us now, because that grates on the ear like old Hebrew mixed with Chaldee; but spirits speak in all languages, and we think they speak quite up to the mark. Sometimes the spirits appear in bodily form, and deliver oral lectures, which ravish the ears and charm the hearts of those who listen.

Healing mediumship has been adopted as a profession by scores of persons possessing peculiar magnetic virtue, controlled by philanthropic spirits, who make such singular cures of the halt and the blind, with all other forms of diseases, that they are more resorted to than the ordinary physicians.

Prophecy, or speaking by the impression or inspiration of spirits, is so common, and so extraordinary, that we have many who excel the best normal speakers, and are able to draw crowded audiences where the common pulpit orators are obliged to preside over empty pews. For profundity of thought, manly eloquence, and the true beauties of style, our inspirational speakers are well known, and as well appreciated for the reformatory and progressive tendency of what they advance.

We don't see angels now! Why? Because they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of common sense. Probably angels would still come under a theocracy, as messengers from the King; but to us poor democratic mortals they only appear as our friends, and sometimes as our guides and instructors. Those who have the imperial orders of angels and archangels we always suspect of having read nothing but the bible all their days, and as unfit to converse with spirits. The imperial reign of spirits has come to an end, for the idea of oriental despotisms does not impress the minds of mediums now, unless in a few cases—the result of sectarian proclivities. Spirits are men; many very elevated in the scale of human progress, and many that need our ministry more than we need theirs. We believe in communing with the great and good, but we are not going to claim these characteristics for all spirits. But we do aver that spirits teach elevating doctrines, and that spiritualism is now achieving a work which will better the condition of man, both here and hereafter; and that mere faith in a future life is being exchanged for the certainty of knowledge, by spirit intercourse.

BENJAMIN MAZEL'S SPIRITUAL COSMOGONY.

ARTICLE THE FIRST.

It has always seemed somewhat strange to the writer, that though the literature of Spiritualism has received many additions in France—both in the form of periodical works and separate publications—little notice has been taken, at least publicly in England, of the contents of such works. The two periodicals of MM. Rivail (Allan Kardec) and Piérart receive occasional attention, it is true, but even the elaborate works of the former author, ranging over every possible area of human inquiry, are known but to a comparative few. Among such little known books, none perhaps is stronger than a little volume in duodecimo, of which the translated title is as follows: "History of the First Men, or the end of all Misunderstandings. A Revelation, written under the Dictation of a Spirit, by Benjamin Mazel (Paris, 1861)."

The writer purchased this work in Paris some years ago, just as it had appeared, and, as mentioned in the *Spiritual Magazine* (vol. iii., p. 95), the writer met several energetic Spiritualists at various centres in that city. The number of Spiritualists having no doubt been much on the increase since that time—December, 1861,—a sketch of the contents of M. Mazel's book may therefore be interesting to the readers of the *Spiritual Times*.

It should first be mentioned that there is a "bit puzzle," as the Scotch would say, in the prefatory address of the editor of this singular book. He asserts it to be written by the dictation of a spirit, but also says that if others choose to regard it as an ordinary work of imagination, it is all one to him—he "willingly accepts the position, form is of little moment—truth alone is of utility." But he presently continues, "it is right to tell the reader that the imagination has remained estranged from the record he is about to peruse."

The theory upon which the spiritual authorship of the book is founded is, that at the moment of departure, it is possible for a living man to enter into the knowledge possessed by immortal spirits, and see by the eye of the dying all those mysteries of cosmic and historical importance over which the impenetrable veil of the past has been thrown; and, it is right to say, that throughout the pages of this singular record, this theory is constantly and continually asserted. The writer considers himself at liberty to express no opinion, or to withhold any fragmentary opinion he may have been led to form as to the foundation of the theory in fact. What has here to be reported upon is merely the contents, and those the writer deems fairly open to such comments as may arise, while the writer's own language is also used in this necessarily compressed synopsis. Finally, M. Mazel asserts that the whole volume was thus "inspired," "dictated," or rather fixed in his, the editor's, mind within the space of five minutes; at the end of this time the last breath of the passing spirit was drawn, and the new life entered on.

It would seem that a sick man, attended by his only daughter, was at the point of death from a lingering malady, and, as may be readily supposed, his last hours were occupied with the thoughts of the fate of the daughter about to be left behind. Yet he is so impatient to be gone, and rejects her proffered potions which alone can preserve him to life. On the other side of the bed was another female, who watched anxiously the condition of the daughter who would soon require her support more than the dying man. Two priests, for it is a Romish household, recite the prayers proper to his extreme state, at the foot of the bed, and the "medium" (so the writer will distinguish the author, or editor, throughout this report), a near relation and fond friend, completed the witness of the solemn event. The time is February, the place—French, and the style of narrative also, the reader will agree, of a decidedly French tinge. Moral reflections are susceptible of omittal.

Suddenly, the last flicker of life's feeble candle luridly burst upon the sick man's countenance; his time was come, but with it the conviction of immortality broke upon him; placidly and calmly he took leave of his friends—and spoke no more. He was not dead, but the time for all human speech was past; a few moments of dumb, struggling breathing—and then—!

"But was that man but a little while ago alive and healthy, full of intellectual faculties—yet a corpse? No, there was breath! But, that breath ended, would that body cease to live, and be but inert and destructible, doomed to annihilation; or would it retain a principle of life? If so, could the spirit that endowed it with motion separate itself? And if matter be indestructible, and the soul is inseparable from the body, what if there be no such thing as matter,—but all life, all soul?"

Full of this thought, the medium moved to the mantle-shelf; there, by a strange accident, lay a book which the dying man had often used; a page lay open, "On the immortality of the soul." At that solemn time, what more interesting than to know the nature of the passage on which the passing spirit had so often mused. He seized the book and read the chapter, and passed into an ecstatic state—unconscious of the scene around.

Presently, he heard a groan, and then the sigh of the wind swallowed up sensation; his mind seemed wrapped in a cloud, and some mysterious link bound him to the soul of the dying man. "Oh, great Father," the medium cried, "guide and sustain and instruct me in this moment."

A confusion of sounds burst upon the medium's sensorium—wind and fire, storm and thunder-clap, sweet melodies and hard discords, a very Babel of indescribable roaring and howling, ended by an infinite multitude of human voices speaking in every language and every dialect. But every voice and sound bore but one answer to the medium's ear, "Blessed be thy desire, and it shall be satisfied!"

Upon this, a ladder, representing time, nonexistence (*néant*), space, and eternity, is visible to him, and he ascends, each round of the ladder taking him back ten centuries. It appears a long ladder, and the voices accompany him till the summit is attained; invisible hands cease to sustain him upon his seating himself at the apex of the immense ascent.

Planets and suns disappeared in the infinite space as he mounted, and at last it seemed to him that he was at least sixty centuries anterior to the commencement of creation, in that void and chaos whence the world was to emerge in the vast future. Darkness surrounded the medium, and fear possessed him; for he was in the abysses of eternity. This passed away, however, for could danger exist where there was neither time nor space, neither above nor below? Personality even was lost, and he found himself an impalpable being, all thought and spirit perception, will-less and weak, "a visual ray, forced to witness the enormous spectacle of creation about to begin."

"Space," he says, "now became visible to me in all its immensity, and all its impotence." A sensation of pain gradually succeeded, and led to a power of thought, a knowledge of his own existence. A faculty of distinguishing between himself and something beyond next ensued, this was intellect; "that uncreated thing," he observes, "which we know because the whole world feels it" though invisible; susceptible of infinite subdivision, this subdivision, which he defines as a kind of friction, giving the first impulse to creative force. Though nothing became visible, the medium felt that creation had begun.

Heat next was felt, but invisible and impalpable. The writer feels that the divisions of these processes into periods of time would only add to the length of this synopsis, so will omit them in future, merely saying that they are generally periods of one thousand years. Heat produced in its turn light, but instantly became as it were confounded with it, and so remains indistinguishable from it for all eternity. These two forces together gave birth to impalpable matter, whence in course of ages the universe and its myriads of planets were to be formed. This impalpable matter the medium found to be electricity, in which caloric and light were dissolved, without, however, losing their own natures. The three bodies now formed themselves into a light cloud, or aura, which commenced an infinite round of circular motion "towards an indeterminate point," says the medium, by which the writer understands that the direction of motion was the infinite tangent of an infinite circle. This aura, also, the medium perceived, described an infinite motion upon its own axis, and grew, in the course of ages, to considerable dimensions.

Its appearance was continually changing; sometimes like an arid desert, anon a mountain covered with exuberant vegetation and prodigious trees, then a monster animal or reptile, a flame-ocean, or a lake of calms, and then a sea of furious billows—types of the worlds to come in their infinite variety.

Again the aura transformed itself: dividing into two unequal clouds, and assuming human forms—one an athletic man, black haired and curly, his proportions formidable as his will was strong, his intellect sovereign, his carriage majestic. The other's shape was that of a lovely woman, with flaxen hair, and shoulders of alabaster—her mind apparently as lovely as her body. Both these figures, weird shadows of an era yet to come, were of gigantic height, as Pelion or the cedars of Lebanon.

The shadow-man and shadow-woman, as if impelled by the impulses of their nature, met, and the cloud aura again assumed their shapeless form, and the types of man's primeval ancestors faded away. The larger cloud, of greater density, was then impelled into the centre of the circle they had begun to describe, and then obeyed an impulse of self-rotation; while the lesser cloud, in like manner, arriving at a certain distance rotated round the other, and the laws of magnetic attraction and repulsion were first established.

The writer having now, like the Welshman with the terrible pedigree, got to a period about which the world was created, thinks he may well be excused, till the second paper, from the task of epitomising the visions of M. Mazel.

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUALISM IN AUSTRALIA.

LETTER VI.

General remarks on the phenomena detailed in the preceding letter.
TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EMPIRE."

SIR,—The weather was dry, the wind southerly, and the sky clouded; but, notwithstanding the apparent dryness of the weather, the tones of an old violin which the writer has been accustomed to regard as a sort of barometer portended rain. In fact rain fell on the following day. The members of the circle were all in good health, nowise afraid, and hence quite calm and collected.

The tips and movements of the table were very decided, and, beyond all doubt, were produced by some force, agent, or power foreign to the persons who were sitting round the table. Several times during the *seance* the light was brought in, and then whilst the room was lit, so as that every one in the apartment could see what every body else was doing, the table was moved in answer to questions in so marked a manner, as to convince the three persons sitting round it, that it was moved by some agent, or force, distinct from any force which they could or did exert. All the persons present declare that they were fully satisfied they did not do the *tippling*. Our position at the table, and all the other circumstances of the case, including our knowledge of each other's character, and the (to us) known impossibility of any of us doing what the table did, or causing it to do what it did, convinced us that the agent or force that moved the table was not muscular pressure, either consciously or unconsciously applied. For example, R. sat at the end of the table, F. at the side, and G. at the side opposite to F. The table was almost always tipped at the end at which R. sat, and, to make the table tip at that end, R. must have lifted his hands off the table, and have caught hold of the edge of it, and so have lifted it up and then let it fall again. But, on several occasions, when the table was in the act of tipping, F. felt R.'s hands resting on the surface of the table. Hence at the time R. from his position could not possibly have been tipping the table, nor could G. from his position have been doing it. F. therefore, has as strong evidence as the nature of the subject will admit of, that there was something in the room capable of moving the table, quite distinct from any of the persons present, or any material force they could consciously produce. The tilts of the table were very marked and decided. Indeed the legs of it occasionally pounded on the floor, so as to cause the floor of the house to jar and vibrate. The raps and thuds, occasioned by these movements, could have been heard a good way off, and were audible in every room of the house. There was no mistake—there could have been no mistake—about these raps. They were not such feeble ticks, or scratches, as might have been produced by insects, or by creaking of the chairs, or by pressure of hands upon the table, but, on the contrary, were loud and demonstrative noises occasioned by a moderately heavy dining table rising up on two of its legs, and then falling on the floor, sometimes easily, and, at other times, with great force. There appeared also to be a difference between the modes in which the different spirits purporting to be present moved the table. The presence which purported to be the spirit of my deceased son, moved the table along the floor from side to side. George Dunn moved it up and down, and crosswise, with great force, while, under the influence of what purported to be Sophia B.—, the movements of it were subdued and gentle. All this harmonises with all that the writer knows, and all that he can imagine respecting the characters of the supposed communicating agents.

The spirit of George Dunn told us very candidly that it was evil, and would hurt us if it could, but that it was restrained by love. We may well ask what love? Certainly it was not the love which George Dunn bore to us. May we not justly conclude that the evil agencies of the spiritual world are restrained by that boundless benevolence which shines conspicuously in all the laws of mind, and in all the arrangements and adaptations of the physical world?

The whole of the circumstances detailed in this report unmistakeably evince intelligence. There may have been but one agent present during the whole time of the *seance*, and that agent may have personated my deceased son and also Sophia B.—, of Maitland, but, nevertheless, the agent that was present, no matter who or what it was, exhibited intelligence, and intelligence, too, of a very varied order. The writer was the only person in the circle that knew anything about persons of the name of B.—n, residing at Maitland, and he did not even think of them at the time the name was being spelled by the tipping agent, nor indeed until the spelling of the name was so far advanced as to suggest the idea. Thus, when five out of the six letters in the name were spelled, he finished the name in thought with N, and the next moment the table tipped at N, thus confirming his surmise. How could a blind force, be it electricity, or odyl, or terrestrial magnetism, or any other material force, operating under the dominion of fixed and unbending laws, have spelled out this name, and have told the writer, at the very moment when he had no thought of such a person in his mind, that he had known a person of that name, and had known her in Maitland. Again, why should the communication, purporting to come from my son, be so pertinent to facts of which no other person in the room, beside the writer, had any knowledge. I asked for a communication that would convince me that the spirit purporting to be the spirit of my son, really was the spirit of my son, and the communication given in reply was certainly as convincing as one as could have been given in language.

In fact, the entire proceedings evince intelligence of a very varied order, and hence we are shut down to some one of the following conclusions.

1. The events recorded never happened, and the recorder of them is an impostor, who, for some reason best known to himself, wishes to tell lies by wholesale. The persons who are said to have been present at the *seance* are mythical personages whose initials are given merely for the purpose of giving the semblance of truth to the narrative.

2. The events never happened, but, the writer, although not an impostor, was deluded in some mysterious way, so as to believe that the events happened, and that certain persons were present, who were not so.

3. The three persons who are reported to have been present, have all joined in carrying on a worthless imposture, or else, they are all crazy fools, and have been equally deluded.

4. The rappings, noises, tilts of the table, and answers all came from the persons sitting at the table, in accordance with Faraday's theory of muscular pressure, unconsciously applied.

5. Electricity, terrestrial magnetism, telluric influences, animal magnetism, odyl, or some other imponderable, gave the communications, and produced the movements of the table.

6. The communications were given by odyl, or a force acting under the automatic influence of the brains of the persons sitting round the table. The intelligence evinced in these communications was not real, but only apparent, and merely shows that the brain can act odylically, either with or without mind, and, in either case, the action of it be representative of intelligence.

7. There was one conscious invisible spirit present, who gave the communications and personated other spirits.

8. There were several spirits present, and they were the veritable spirits they purported to be.

The reader will of course adopt whichever of these hypotheses he pleases, but he certainly must adopt some one of them. The last hypothesis is the one I believe to be true. All the facts harmonise with it, but not with any of the others. It is the most natural hypothesis, and in no wise strained and far-fetched like the others. The facts, too, naturally suggest it, but they do not suggest any of the others. Assuming it to be true, let us gather up into a focus the general conclusions which the facts recorded evidently force upon the reason.

1. There is a God, a great governing intelligence, who is full of mercy and love to all his creatures.

2. There are evil agents in the spiritual world who would injure human beings if they were not restrained from doing so.

3. The power or force that restrains evil spiritual agents is Love, which must exist outside of the evil agents themselves, and consequently may very justly be supposed to centre in the Supreme Being.

4. Either these evil agents are permitted by the Supreme Being, whose existence they acknowledge, and who is said by them to be full of mercy and love to all his creatures, to trifle with the holiest and tenderest affections of human nature, by personating departed spirits, representing themselves as the relatives of the persons they communicate with, or else the spirits of the dead can, under certain favourable conditions, manifest themselves to the living, assuring the latter of the reality of a spiritual world, as well as of the certainty of an immortal life after the death of the body, and showing them that spirits can give almost overwhelming proofs of spirit identity, and that they take a lively interest in the welfare of those they have left behind in the flesh.

5. When a number of persons sit round a table, and lay their hands on it, for the purpose of evoking spiritual phenomena, they, in some way or other, at present unknown, present conditions by and through which spirits are able to manifest themselves to the living.

6. The phenomena called spiritual are produced through the persons sitting round a table, but not by them.

F. S.

Correspondence.

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of correspondents.]

ELECTRICITY AND RAPPING.

[To the EDITOR of the SPIRITUAL TIMES.]

SIR,—The letter of F. S. Wollongong, in your last issue, detailing various speculations concerning the origin of spiritual manifestations is very interesting.

Respecting that part where the agency of electricity is attributed by some as the cause, I would beg to lay before your readers some extracts from my journal of *seances*, given from Plaucheth, when it will be found that the spirits mention magnetism as the means whereby they communicate—thus, "The table is not sufficiently magnetised, we cannot do much this evening."

It seems also that the greater the harmony of the sitters with each other, the better will be the results, the combined magnetism being more uniform, and consequently more powerful—thus, "Unity is strength, affection and kindness towards each other is one of God's laws and commands: this much strengthens our power to communicate with you, it adds to our happiness and yours."

Another important thing at *seances* is to allow the free movement of the table, or whatever else that may be used in its place—thus, "When you sit leave the action of the table to take its course, and you will have better manifestations."

The apartment, also, in which the sitting is held, should not be too cold—thus, "The cold interferes with the magnetic power, and therefore you have not the manifestations."

I agree with F. S. that electricity, *per se*, is not the cause; but I think when the magnetisms of the sitters have become sufficiently harmonised with those of the spirits, possibly through the instrumentality of the table, or whatever else may be used in its place, that then electricity is employed as a co-agent to produce sound, &c.

At our last sitting, some evenings since, the raps were of various degrees of loudness, and I particularly noticed some, the sounds of which were as if a metallic substance had been struck against the leg of the table. The reason why I mention this is because yesterday there

was a thunder storm, and some of the rumblings or claps were exactly of the quality of sound or diapason as those just mentioned.

Having made the foregoing remarks, I do not wish to intrude further on your space, other than to hope that your readers will contribute, through these pages, any information thereon which they may possess.

I am, sir, yours obediently,
Bayswater, August 22nd, 1864. T. S.

PROFESSOR ANDERSON.

[To the Editor of the SPIRITUAL TIMES.]

Dear Sir,—I dreamt last night that "Professor" Anderson, just in the midst of his charmingly delightful and feeble bluster about Spiritualism, was rudely "collared" by a "bobby." No; I must correct myself; it was not a dream, nor reality—simply what I heard the "Professor" say—although it may be as much of one as the other. Here it is. "Mr Home was as justly treated, and met with the same merited 'punishment' at the hands of the government of Rome as any fortune-teller or swindler would do in England, and if he, Professor Anderson, could be made responsible for what his Professor Anderson's "table should say by raps, he should expect to be collared by 306 A, imprisoned and punished for fortune telling and swindling."

After describing Mr Home as one of the "conjurers of Spiritualism, and a humbug," the Professor gave us a few clumsy and vulgar mechanical manifestations of his own mediumship, which he, with the coolest effrontery of spiritual ignorance, assured his audience was the only true use of "table rapping," and nothing more than an "ingenious trick" practised by mediums upon their dupes, who the Professor said, not only rob them of their last shilling but also of their reason and intelligence.

Need I tell you that the merest babe in Spiritualism could see through the transparency of this ingenious materialism and where the humbug is? Can you inform me whether the Professor, after his fifteen years' investigation and scrutiny regrets that he is not yet "up to" spiritual conjuring? If so, however dull he may be in things spiritual, he may yet learn a new trick from the Davenport Brothers when they arrive in England, and he may also learn how ineffectual will be all his scornful and puny attempts at merely mechanical substitutions for the great facts of Spiritualism.

Yours truly, RALPH DOLPHIN.
1, Sykes's Terrace, Mile End Road.

ORTHODOXY, LIBERTY, AND PROGRESS.

It has been and still is the jargon of schools, colleges, and universities, to talk of the corruption and imperfection of nature, and to represent one part of man as being opposed to another part of human nature, and that we must "crucify the flesh and overcome nature." Thus do "Christian ministers" teach, thus do they libel human nature, and, perhaps unwittingly insult the God of nature. As Dr Southwood Smith has truly said, "Nature is perfect everywhere and in every part. Opposing and jarring actions, antagonising, and mutually destructive powers, are combined in no other work of Nature; and it would be wonderful indeed were the only instance of it found in man the noblest of her works, and in the mind of man the noblest part of her noblest work. No one supposes that there is any such inharmonious combination in the organization of his physical frame, and the notion that it exists in his mental constitution, as it is founded in the grossest ignorance, so it is productive of incalculable mischief." Yet such is orthodox doctrine, with the promise of fire and brimstone to the unbelieving, as inculcated and preached by legalized and unlegalised ministers of State Churches and sectaries, just as if such spiritual and religious tyrannies were needed to keep the political state tyrannies in countenance. "If such doctrine were true," as says a modern writer, "then is man an anomalous exception to that universal law of Nature, which by a secret spur of uneasiness, prompts every creature to seek the fullest measure of its gratification, in the fullest application of its powers. The young plant strains towards the light, the young bird flutters to the air, the young seal glides to the waters, and this is not less their destiny than their joy; but man, if he would unfold the hidden capacity, or obey the impelling instincts of his being, he alone, it seems is miserable; he alone of created things is happy while he resists the strong impulse of his God-given endowments—while he extinguishes himself and plays the rebel to his nature! Preposterous theory! Man will, on the contrary, only then attain the sum of his moral felicity, when all his faculties are developed, all his passions in full but wisely moderated play, the whole diapason of his nature shall give out its rich harmonious sound, beneath the skilful pressure of social love. Nor need we suppose that, for the attainment of this vast result, the extinction of the great sequestering yet repulsive principle which has hitherto enslaved him—his strong self-love, will be required; for in the words of the poet—and words of profounder wisdom never fell from human lips—"True self-love and social are the same." Never has it been clearly defined, by so-called "Christian" teachers, what it is that constitutes the real meaning of the thing or things signified by the word Christianity. The various sects, all under the name of "Christian," inculcate and profess opposite and diverse systems, all drawn from the same source, the Bible, and the more the Bible is studied and taken as authority, the more divergent and multiplicitary are these systems of morality and religion. As "Governments" have become more liberal and tolerant,

awakening free thought and inquiry, in the same ratio sectarian dogmas have increased and sects multiplied. The reason is obvious, namely, free thought and inquiry cast doubts upon these doctrines, make men dissatisfied with them, open their eyes to their absurdity, and schism is the consequence.

And in proportion that men are educated, enlightened, and acquire the courage to think for themselves, they break away from the old notions, amend and modify old creeds, excogitate new theories and doctrines, get up new speculative creeds, parties and sects. When the individual becomes able, and dares to exercise his thoughts, reason, and analysis upon these doctrines, he soon becomes a "heretic," "sceptic," or "infidel," breeds disunion in his church, and then collects and organizes a party in his favour, who are reprimanded, excommunicated; they then go off to build up a new sect, which, by-the-bye, shares the same fate. The same causes, namely, free enquiry, the right of private judgment and liberty of conscience, that originated the first disaffection and schism, still at work, produce more dissensions and schisms, thus multiplying doctrines, and parties, and sects in a compound ratio.

This is the true explanation of the multifarious denominations with their variety of doctrines and creeds. The very same causes, the right of private judgment, and liberty of conscience, which in Luther produced the "Protestant Reformation," and which was its platform and glory, has produced all the multiplied schisms, sects, creeds, and doctrines that have since appeared and do now exist. The very same formula of civil and religious freedom, (which in words men extol to the skies, and which their acts contravene,) will, just as surely as time rolls on, continue its schismatical work of analyzing catechisms and creeds, testing doctrines, questioning their origin, and disintegrating the sects, until thought and conscience is free from all external ecclesiastical association or rule, and every man becomes his own sect or church.

This is the course that free enquiry must inevitably run, and this is the result it is tending to produce. It commenced by resisting all Church authority over the individual thought and conscience, and dismembering the vast ecclesiastical dynasty against which it was pointed. It did not cease when Luther died, but has ever since continued its "protests" and its dismembering policy. All the church dissensions, heresies, and schisms it has ever bred are but "Protestant Reformations" on a smaller scale, produced and carried on by the operation of the same principle.

This same principle, by sure dissolution and disintegration, is wasting away all those iron hierarchies of the past, which have gloried in a rampant tyranny over the thoughts and consciences of men, and is ultimating in the complete individuality of opinion and belief on all questions not scientifically demonstrated. Church divisions, religious and theological controversies, ecclesiastical insubordination, and the multiplication of sects and parties is therefore an undoubted evidence of progress; and is a demonstration of the continued triumph of the great principle of the Reformation, in impeaching and overthrowing all organized religious despotisms over the free thought and conscience of the individual. So long as any organized dogmatical religion or ecclesiastical hierarchial association or combination, resting on the basis of a speculative creed, shall remain, the "Protestant Reformation" is still unfinished, and its all-conquering principle still successfully operative, demolishing arbitrary dogmatism into the dust. The work goes on in our time. There never was such a breaking up of old religious dynasties, and such a universal questioning of creeds, and consternation of bigots! When, through the agency of this great principle of liberty, men are at last freed from all manner of tyrannies as developed in popes, kings, statesmen, lawyers, man-made laws, priests, bishops, ecclesiastical organizations, *odium theologicum*, anathema, &c., when thought and conscience shall be emancipated from their thralldom, then will men be ready and qualified for, and will naturally come into, the true religion, viz., The science of life, both here and hereafter, as revealed by God to mankind in man's own physical, mental, passion, moral, and spiritual organizations, with their adaptations and uses.

Meanwhile, our duty is progression; not progression in the dominations, vanities, and injustices now going on, but in their suppression; not progress in mere physical things, nor in mere intellectual things, but progress of our whole manhood, in useful knowledge, wisdom, virtue, and happiness. And whatever of our rights, privileges, and liberties, the gifts of God, are taken away or withheld from us, so as to hinder or impede our progress, it is our duty to strive, by every fair means in our power, to recover those divine gifts, so as to be able to render efficient our endeavours to cultivate, improve, and enjoy the world without, and the world within us, to the full fruition attainable in the present sphere of our existence.

The harmonious development of the whole human organisms, faculties, and powers; the proper and healthful exercise and gratification of the natural tendencies and suggestions of the soul, in their exuberance and balanced action, to the point of temperance, "the golden mean;" constitute true and real manhood. And as we approach to this state we "put away childish things," and enlarge the sphere of our exertions, observations, and enjoyments; and if we persevere onwards we shall become full and real men and women; not merely in physical stature, our intellectual, moral, and spiritual nature will expand and demand a higher and wider range of activity, while the external body demands air, exercise, and other requisites for its health and symmetrical development.

When this shall be realised must depend on the efforts of man himself; no human being who has arrived at the age of discretion ought to exempt himself or herself from the endeavour to bring about "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

But the present established order, disorder, or method of society, is unfavourable to such a consummation, and is therefore false. What then is the true order? Of this anon.

G. E. HIRARS.

THE MEDIUMS. AN ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL TALE.

BY J. H. POWELL.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

Am I to be denounced for testifying to that which I know to be true? Am I to be told that I pretend to subvert the theories of all science and religion, when my aim has been throughout my lecture to argue, first, that true science, becoming developed by ages of experimental tests, grows up, like a stalwart oak, to withstand the tempests of prejudice and opposition? Spiritualism finds a friend in science, and to me, it seems a perversity of the teachings of science, for those who are called its leaders, to call in question the teachings of Spiritualism without first investigating its phenomena. Science has grown up from the very impelling force of investigation; how, therefore, its devotees can consistently oppose Spiritualism, which must grow up in the same manner, is a puzzling problem I cannot solve. Let the phenomena of Spiritualism, like those of science, be fairly and impartially studied; and I am content to abide the issue. But to decry Spiritualism merely because it has been excluded from the modern scientific schools, because of the materialistic forces at work, crushing out of the soul the spiritual part of life, is, to say the least, an unworthy task for the Solons of Science. Besides, who shall dare to set a boundary to the progress of science even? Can you circumscribe the workings of science, and satisfy us that what is already known of matter in its chemical combinations, and in its solidified states, embraces all that *can* be known? If not, let us hesitate before we denounce the advocates of new philosophies and truths, as men who "pretend to subvert the theories of all science and religion." Now let us briefly touch upon what our friend supposed to be the theories of religion, which he says I desire or pretend to subvert. It is well known that for ages the battles of religion have been going on. Several hundred different sects have sprung into existence, each and all, purporting to be the true sect. I should like to know if I am to be accused of pretending to subvert *all* the theories of religion—whether the advocates of all the theories, excepting the original one, may not justly be told the same? I suppose our friend would not like me to call him a Pagan; if not, let him know that Paganism was subverted by Christianity. I, of course, cannot *pretend* to say what particular religious creed he endorses, but this I know, if he accept any one of the many hundred creeds extant, he has adopted an innovation; and to be consistent, should go back to original Paganism." At this point, the long-faced young gentleman in the turn-down collar, applauded. The rest of the audience, excepting the old gentleman and the lady in spectacles, did the same. The bald-crowned, silvery-haired old gentleman bit his lips with vexation, and the red deepened in his face. Mr Humphrey saw the impression he had made, and feeling gratified, continued:—"Spiritualism, friends, is no new-fangled-belief, got up by a few ignoramuses, with the intention of gulling the public, or subverting any truth, either in science or religion. But it subverts error, fulfils its mission, and does the cause of progress and humanity good service. Here I see in it a great necessity. It is to be regretted that materialism has been creeping more and more, not only into the circles of men of science, but into the pulpit. Men have, for long centuries, worn the outward habiliments of decaying creeds, whilst the inward fruits of their lives have been rotting. Conventicle cant and assumed Infallibles have divided the remnants of Sectarianism; whilst religion, which, properly understood, is so simple, that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein, has been in very truth 'subverted.' Spiritualism comes to herald the simplicity and power of Christ's religion. It comes, not to subvert the true, but the false; not to destroy faith, but to preserve it. Therefore, the charge, that I pretend to subvert the theories of all religion, is as groundless as the former charge against science. Our friend next refers to the statement of mine, that I have seen a table in my own house, rise in mid-air; and triumphantly asks me to make this table rise, before he will consent to admit my veracity. If I were a mere juggler, as he supposes,

such a thing would be easy of accomplishment. But seeing I am no juggler, it must be plain that I ought to have the same conditions as I there had, before I am called upon to give ocular proof of this nature. I have found at present, that I am simply a writing and seeing medium, not what is termed a physical medium. I shall be very happy privately to hold a séance, and testify to the truth of my statements; but I have not the honour of Mr Forbes' company this evening, if I had, I doubt not but such a phenomenon might be produced."

"Who is Mr Forbes?" shouted the bald-crowned, silvery-haired old gentleman, discourteously. "Mr Forbes is a gentleman living in Lincoln Inn-fields, London, who makes a profession of giving séances; if any of you feel interested in the erratic movements of a table, I should advise you to speculate a guinea with that gentleman, and I think he will give you as much to marvel at, as will take the whole of your lives to explain on any other than the Spirit-hypothesis." The old gentleman grew so restless, that he was the observed of all observers; he felt disposed to offer a few more objections, but being ashamed to display un-English conduct, he allowed Mr Humphrey to continue. "Our friend likewise calls upon me to let the spirit of my wife appear before this audience. Well, if she felt disposed, and were favoured with favourable conditions, I should have no objection. But if she do not appear here, does that prove she did not appear at my house? I have shewn that spirit-manifestations depend on certain conditions and media; they come often when least expected. We cannot demand them, but are bound to accept them as they come. I once heard the verse of a favourite hymn sung by a trio of spirit-voices. I would give half I possess, to be able to call those voices into play at pleasure; but although I have anxiously listened and entreated the spirits to give me a repetition, it has never yet come. This is not my fault. And neither is it the fault perhaps of the spirits. We have simply to elicit the manifestations, and to profit from their teachings. We can no more help the fact that they are of an intermittent, occasional character, than we can help it that comets and earthquakes, make only occasional visitations. I have only to say I thank you for your kind attention, and trust you will all examine the matter for yourselves." Mr Humphrey sat down. The old bald-crowned, silvery-haired gentleman, and long-faced gentleman, of the turn-down collar, both rose together. The old gentleman exclaimed:—"What, go and pay Mr Forbes a guinea to see a table under the influence of galvanism, kick about like a dying frog!"

The young gentleman in a very courteous voice, said:—"I am very pleased with the clearness and gentlemanly conduct of our lecturer. I think he has annihilated the arguments used by the last speaker, whom I should recommend to enlighten his mind with rules of logic, before he attempts disputing in public again. I think, however, it would ill-become us to allow this lecture to pass without putting it to the vote, whether or not, the lecturer has converted any of us. He is a clever speaker, and has handled his subject in a masterly manner; and that is one reason, I think, why we should take care to give our votes against his conclusions. Because, friends, it is a serious thing when you look at it, to be called upon to sanction views so ultra to popular feeling. Therefore, I shall, with your permission, put it to the vote." He was just in the act of doing so, when Mr Humphrey rose and said:—"You can all of you do as you like about voting, but please to bear in mind, I did not expect in a single lecture to, convert any of you. If I have been the means of stimulating enquiry on this all-important subject, I shall be amply recompensed. Before I sit down, I will say I think it inadvisable to gauge the value of opinions I have enunciated by a simple shew of hands."

The old gentleman rose, and objected to the voting plan, out of disregard for the proposer. Had he remained silent, the long-faced gentleman, in the turn-down collar, would have rescinded his original intention; but such was his desire to oppose him, that he got up and put it to a shew of hands, whether any of them were converted. No hands were held up. Mr Humphrey smiled and left the hall, as he heard the two disputants in angry argument, while they were following the rest of the assembly into the street.

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